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Highland Twp. man sentenced to life in prison for killing sister

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The Detroit News

Pontiac -- A Highland Township man was sentenced Wednesday for the New Year's Eve 2008 rape and stabbing death of his teenage sister.

Oakland Circuit Judge Edward Sosnick sentenced Steven Michael Kelsey Jr. to mandatory life in prison with no chance of parole.

Kelsey, now 20, was home on leave from U.S Army basic training in December 2008 when he attacked his 17-year-old sister, Jesika, in his mother's mobile home for unknown reasons. The victim was stabbed in the throat and eye and then sexually assaulted, Kelsey told detectives from the Oakland County Sheriff's Office after he was arrested.

Kelsey, who was examined by psychiatrists and found competent to stand trial, had walked eight miles away from the crime scene, disposed of bloody clothing and checked into a motel under a fake name. He was arrested when he began acting oddly outside a store and a worker called police. When some of his army identification was found discarded in a Dumpster, deputies went to his mother's address in an effort to locate him. It wasn't until more than an hour later -- about the same time police had picked up Kelsey that the victim's body was found in her bedroom.

Defense attorney Michael McCarthy never contested that Kelsey was responsible for the slaying but argued unsuccessfully to an Oakland Circuit Court jury that his actions did not constitute first-degree, premeditated murder and that they should instead consider a lesser charge.

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